

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Frederick W. Baldwin, March 12, 1917

COPY for Mrs Bell 1917 March 12 Mr F W Baldwin Beinn Bhreagh Near Baddeck Nova Scotia My dear Mr Baldwin:

I beg to enclose for your information a copy of a letter received from Mr Charles J. Bell, Trustee of the AEA, dated March 9 1917, giving the proposed final disposition of the property of the AEA; and I shall be much obliged if you will let me know immediately whether this disposition will be satisfactory to you.

The Aerial Experiment Association had no funds with which to meet the expenses of applying for patents and of defending them; and the only way of providing the money necessary was for the individual members to contribute such amounts as they could afford to help the Association. The total amount so contributed came to \$5740.79 and has been returned to the Association by the Curtiss Company.

The members of the Association each contributed the sums specified by Mr Charles J Bell simply in order to help the Association and save the patents without any expectation of ever receiving a cent in return. I think therefore that the best disposition of the cash received from the Curtiss Company is to consider it as an asset of the Association to be divided in accordance with our agreements as to the division of proceeds: That is, 35% to Mrs Bell and 13% to each of the members of the Association.

Under this arrangement we will each receive \$746.30 where we did not expect to receive a cent; and Mrs Bell will receive \$2009.29. This arrangement will be satisfactory to me and I/ will also be satisfactory to you.

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Mr Charles J Bell has very generously given his services to the Association as Trustee without making any charge for the same; and I think that, upon the winding up of the Trust it would be a very proper thing for us to present to Mr Charles J Bell a suitable testimonial as a mark of our appreciation and regard

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I therefore suggest that we appoint Mrs Bell a Committee to purchase a suitable testimonial; and that we each contribute about 10% of the cash received by us, as a fund to be expended by Mrs Bell in the purchase.

I propose that Mrs Bell should contribute \$200 and each of us contribute \$74. The total fund thus contributed would then amount to \$570. While this is slightly less than 10% of the cash we will receive, it will be sufficient to purchase a very handsome testimonial.

I propose therefore that we authorize Mrs Bell to expend \$570 in the purchase of a present to be given by the Association to Mr Charles J Bell as a testimonial of appreciation of his services as Trustee of the AEA.

Kindly let me hear from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely, (signed) ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL Enclosure (Similar letters have been sent to Messrs Selfridge, Curtiss, and McCurdy.)

COPY AMERICAN SECURITY & TRUST COMPANY Washington D C March 9 1917 Dr
Alexander Graham Bell 1331 Connecticut Avenue Washington D C Dear Dr Bell:

I received a cheque from Mr Keys for the sum of \$5899.49 being the cash amount agreed upon for the purchase of the AEA patents, which sum represents the amount advanced to the AEA for the obtaining of three patents, two of which are assigned to me as Trustee, and the other is in your name not yet so assigned, but which is the property of the Association. This amount was advanced in the following manner:

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Alexander Graham Bell \$4740.79

Glenn H Curtiss 300.

Douglass McCurdy 100.

Casey Baldwin 300.

Estate of E O Selfridge 300.

Gilbert H Grosvenor 158.70

\$5899.49

These amounts should be refunded to the various members in proportion to the amount paid in, but I understand from your letter of February 20 it is your desire that, with the exception of the amount loaned by Mr Grosvenor \$158.70, a cheque for which I have sent him today, the balance of \$5740.79 is to be treated as an asset of the Association and to be divided in the following manner:

Mabel G Bell 35 % \$2009.29 Alexander Graham Bell 13 % 746.30 Casey Baldwin 13 % 746.30 Glenn H Curtiss 13 % 746.30 Douglass McCurdy 13 % 746.30 Estate of E O Selfridge 13 % 746.30 \$5740.79 2

There is also to be turned over to me as Trustee 250 shares of Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation Preferred, and 250 shares of the Common Stock.

As I understand the arrangement between the members, Mrs Graham Bell is to receive 1% of the amount received in payment of the patents for each \$1000 loaned by her to the Association, and that the amount so loaned by her was \$35,000., so that she would be entitled to receive 35% and each of the other members 13% as follows:

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Preferred Common Mrs A Graham Bell 35% 8750 8750 A Graham Bell 13% 3250. 3250.
Casey Baldwin 13% 3250. 3250. G H Curtiss 13% 3250. 3250. Douglas McCurdy 13%
3250. 3250. Selfridge Estate 13% 3250. 3250. \$25,000 \$25,000

As the preferred shares are of the par value of \$100. it will not be possible to make the actual division as outlined above, and an adjustment will have to be made, so that one will take the additional $\frac{1}{2}$ share in Common, and the other in Preferred stock.

I have today requested Messers Mauro, Cameron, Lewis & Massie to prepare an assignment from you of the patent taken out in your name, to myself as Trustee, and I will then re-assign same to the Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation. As soon as this assignment is prepared I will send it up to you for execution, so as to be ready to make the transfer as soon as Mr Keys forwards the 500 shares of stock.

Under the agreement made with me, I would be entitled to a Commission on the amount received from the sale of the patents, but in view of the small amount paid, I will make no charge for my services.

Yours faithfully, (signed) C J BELL. Trustee, Aerial Experimental Association.